

to be the caretakers of the American Dream—any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Clear Creek ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

#### AMERICAN HEART MONTH

### HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 9, 2016*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize American Heart Month and to acknowledge the tireless advocacy of the staff and volunteers of the American Heart Association, and the organizations in my home state of New Jersey and across the country. They work this month, and year round, in the effort to raise awareness of heart disease, stroke, and other cardiovascular diseases. The Association is leading the charge in increasing visibility of American Heart Month through coordinated campaigns, such as National Wear Red Day on February 5, Go Red For Women, and a congressional briefing on February 24.

American Heart Month provides a critical platform to promote public awareness and heart-healthy lifestyles. The American Heart Association focuses on seven health factors and behaviors that increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, or CVD. These areas of prevention include smoking cessation, physical activity, healthy diet and body weight, as well as managing cholesterol, blood pressure, and blood sugar. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, the leading cause of heart disease and stroke is uncontrolled high blood pressure. Outlining these areas gives us the knowledge to focus our prevention efforts in the fight against CVD.

The statistics speak for themselves. CVD is the leading cause of death nationally and globally. One in three American deaths is caused by CVD, a disease which claims the life of an American every forty seconds. To fully understand what that means, in 2013, the most recent year for which data is available, CVD killed over 800,000 people in America. In addition to the lives it claims, over eighty-five million Americans are currently living with CVD and its effects. CVD also has a real impact on our national economy. Annually, the economic cost of CVD is over \$316 billion. \$1 of every \$6 spent on health care in this country is spent treating CVD.

That said, there is good news. The efforts of the advocates are working. The mortality rate from heart disease has fallen by 38 percent. This is encouraging, but there remains so much more to be done.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the good work being done in my home state in the fight against CVD. The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are funding nineteen Founders Affiliate research awards in the state of New Jersey.

In my own Congressional district, the Meridian Health Foundation's "Women's Heart Fund"—focused on promoting heart health in Monmouth and Ocean Counties—has worked

to promote heart health awareness and raise funds for heart health at the Meridian Health System including the Jersey Shore University Medical Center, Riverview Medical Center, K. Hovnanian Children's Hospital, and Bayshore Community Hospital.

Each year, the Fund selects and supports a cardiac initiative. In 2015, the Fund supported the Community of LifeSavers program. Working together with the American Heart Association, Community of LifeSavers equips everyday people with the skills to perform CPR. Over 5,000 students from seventeen schools have been trained, at no cost to the schools or students, since the program's inception.

I am honored to have served as co-chair of the Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition since the 113th Congress. This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Coalition's establishment and our numbers have grown to over one hundred members of Congress. Over the past twenty years our bi-cameral, bi-partisan Coalition has served as a resource for all members of Congress and worked to advance federal policies that raise the quality of life for individuals with heart disease.

The American Heart Association and the Coalition work in partnership to raise awareness of CVD and provide those of us making funding and policy decisions with the tools and information to address the problems most critical to those affected by CVD.

Heart and stroke patients, as well as their loved ones and caregivers, need vocal advocates on Capitol Hill to ensure access to quality care and treatments. We have a duty to see that programs aimed at combating CVD, as well as medical research for prevention and treatment of stroke and heart attacks are supported appropriately at the federal level.

As we look forward to promoting awareness during American Heart Month, it is important to remember that the work continues year round. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my colleagues who are fellow members of the Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition and thank them for their efforts. I encourage those members who have not yet joined the Coalition to do so. The Coalition will continue to work with the Association throughout the year in the fight against America's number one killer.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 9, 2016*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard-working School Board members of Needville Independent School District.

Our school board members of Needville ISD in the 22nd Congressional District of Texas play a critical role in the success of our schools. Our district is the most diverse and fastest growing congressional district in America, due largely in part to the hard-working and caring educators and school board members that dedicate their time and energy on our schools; ensuring that our children can achieve whatever they set their mind to. Our school board members were elected or hired to be the caretakers of the American Dream—

any child can be anything they want—if they receive the education that will give them the necessary tools to achieve their dream. Our schools are stronger because each of them embrace the challenge.

On behalf of the Twenty-Second Congressional District of Texas, thank you again to Needville ISD for being Super-Heroes in developing our leaders of tomorrow.

#### KINGWOOD HIGH SCHOOL AT THE PAN AMERICAN DEBATE CHAMPIONSHIP

### HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 9, 2016*

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Kingwood High School Debate team has been invited to compete at the Pan American Schools Debate Championships in Vancouver, Canada on March 16th, 2016. The competition is organized by the Pan-American Debate Organization (PADO) and aims "to promote debate in the Americas, and to encourage high school students to participate in international competitions."

Members of Team Kingwood include Morgan Lee, junior; Reese Grayson, senior; Colette Faulkner, junior—also the designated alternate to Team USA; Connor Smith, junior; Gaurav Gawankar, junior. The team is coached by Audra and Jason Langston. These students will not only be representing their high school, but the state of Texas as well. As they enter the competition, the Texas students will face competitors representing Argentina, Bermuda, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Peru, USA and Venezuela. The Kingwood team will be the only team that will represent a high school, rather than a country.

The principles of open debate have long been a lifeblood to our democracy. Society is shaped every day by open conversation, public opinion and debate. The great debaters, men like Patrick Henry, Daniel Webster, and John C. Calhoun shaped American society, bringing democracy to a new born nation. Debaters like Margaret Thatcher broke barriers, improved economies, and shaped their countries' policies for an entire generation. Great Debaters are leaders who have had an impact on our society.

These students have taken the first step towards becoming future leaders. Debate teaches students how to speak both powerfully and persuasively, fosters critical thinking, and how to defend their point of view. As a former debater, Judge and Congressman, I know that it's important to learn how to make a point.

Congratulations to the Kingwood Debate team. Good luck at the Pan American Championships.

And that is just the way it is.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF OUR STELLAR SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS

### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 9, 2016*

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard working School Board members of Stafford Municipal School District.